

**INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION  
AND/OR  
REQUEST FOR A  
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

**PROGRAM/ACTIVITY DATA:**

**Program/Activity Number:** SO: 690-0016  
**Country/Region:** USAID-Regional Center for Southern Africa (RCSA)  
**Program/Activity Title:** SO 16: Improved Electoral Competition in Southern Africa  
**Sub-activity Name:** Partnerships for Electoral Progress (PEP)

**Funding Begin:** FY 04 **Funding End:** FY 10 **LOP Amount:** \$ 15, 000, 000.

**Sub-Activity Amount:** N/A

**IEE Prepared By:** Jeremy N Burgess, Independent Consultant, and Keboitse Machangana, USAID/RCSA Democracy and Governance Advisor

**Current Date:** 14 April , 2004

**IEE Amendment (Y/N):** No

**ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION RECOMMENDED:** (Place X where applicable)

Categorical Exclusion:   X   Negative Determination:         
Positive Determination:        Deferral:       

**ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS:** (Place X where applicable)

CONDITIONS        PVO/NGO:       

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:**

SO 16 aims to strengthen democratic processes in the southern Africa region through activities that promote the rule of law and respect for human rights; genuine competitive political processes; development of a politically active civil society; more transparent and accountable government institutions; and improved governance. The Partnerships in Electoral Process (PEP) activity focuses specifically on improving the elections processes in southern African countries through promoting greater transparency both prior to and during elections and the adoption and acceptance of regional norms and standards governing the way elections are carried out. As such, a **Categorical Exclusion is recommended for all SO 16 activities implemented under PEP** since the actions to be undertaken will have no effect on the natural or physical environment.

Specifically, the activities qualify for **Categorical Exclusions**, according to the following provisions of the Agency's environmental regulations (22 CFR 216): (a) education and technical assistance (216.2(c)(2)(i)); (b) analyses, studies, and workshops (216.2(c)(2)(iii)); (c) information and document transfer (216.2(c)(2)(v)); and (d) programs intended to develop the capability of recipient countries to engage in development planning (216.2(c)(2)(xiv)).

As required by ADS 204.5.4, the RCSA SO 16 team and implementing partners will "actively monitor and evaluate whether the [activities] are being implemented effectively and whether there are new or unforeseen consequences arising during implementation that were not identified and reviewed in accordance with 22 CFR 216."

The *exact* nature of all the interventions in the SO-level regional program is still to be determined. Therefore, if during implementation, activities other than those described in the subject categorical exclusions are included in PEP that may directly affect the environment (such as construction or rehabilitation of facilities), an amended IEE shall be submitted requesting the appropriate threshold decision. For activities funded under SO 16 that are *outside* the PEP framework, an IEE or Request for a Categorical Exclusion shall be submitted, as appropriate.

**APPROVAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

**CLEARANCE:**

Mission Director: \_\_\_\_\_/cleared/\_\_\_\_\_  
Dawn Thomas (Acting)

Date: 6/16/04

**CONCURRENCE:**

Bureau Environmental Officer: \_\_\_\_\_/cleared/\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Des Rosiers (Acting)

Date: \_\_6/22/04\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_X\_\_\_\_

Disapproved: \_\_\_\_\_

**Filename:** \_34RCSA2\_SO16\_PEP.doc\_\_\_\_\_ (USAID/W BEO)

**ADDITIONAL CLEARANCES:**

Mission Environmental Officer: \_\_\_\_\_/cleared/\_\_\_\_\_  
Marcia Musisi Nkambwe

Date: 6/16/04

Activity Manager: \_\_\_\_\_/cleared/\_\_\_\_\_  
Keboitse Machangana

Date: 6/16/04

SO Team Leader: \_\_\_\_\_/cleared/\_\_\_\_\_  
Keboitse Machangana

Date: 6/16/04

Regional Environmental Officer: \_\_\_\_/signed/\_\_\_\_\_  
Walter Knausenberger

Date: 14 April 2004

Regional Environmental Advisor: \_\_\_\_/cleared/\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Hirsch

Date: 6/21/04

## Annex 1

### JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

**Program/Activity Number:** SO: 690-0016

**Country/Region:** USAID-Regional Center for Southern Africa (RCSA)

**Program/Activity Title:** Partnerships for Electoral Progress (PEP)

### BACKGROUND AND ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

SO 16 is designed to fulfill the U.S. government's objective of strengthening democracy and mitigating the tensions and impacts of conflict in the region. The Partnerships for Electoral Progress (PEP) activity is the main vehicle (others are to be determined) for achieving SO 16 intermediate results:

- IR 16.1: Increased accountability and transparency of electoral competition processes in the region; and
- IR 16.2: Improved electoral processes through compliance with regional norms and standards;
- IR 16.3: Increased regional capacity to mitigate election related conflict and human rights abuses.

Components of PEP are described in more detail below.

### Summary Description of Activities

PEP's geographic focus is on the *seven countries with planned elections in 2004/2005 and 2009/2010*: Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe (and possibly Angola and Zambia).

The purpose of PEP is to promote free, fair, and open elections based on a popular base of support in which the majority has a stake in the outcome. Specifically, PEP seeks to a) facilitate agreement on and broad application of the rules of electoral competition in the region, b) level the playing field for political competition by promoting inclusion of women and other marginalized groups in electoral processes, and c) promote a secure enabling environment for open and free elections and other electoral processes to occur. The PEP Activity has three components<sup>1</sup> as follows:

1. *Electoral Accountability and Transparency*
2. *Regional Elections Norms and Standards*
3. *Prevention and Mitigation of Conflict and Human Rights Abuses*

### Detailed Descriptions of the Components

#### 1. Electoral Accountability and Transparency

Interventions will be aimed at eliminating corruption during and between election cycles, and will supplement the interventions of the other two PEP components, as well as the cross-cutting issues of conflict mitigation, gender and HIV/AIDS. This component will support civil society organizations (CSOs) to improve their oversight of electoral processes. In the near term, this component will focus on supporting CSOs to collect, analyze, and disseminate information related to the elections taking place in 2004 and 2005. In the longer term, this component will place greater emphasis on supporting regional CSOs to (a) build the capacity of their national chapters and (b) strengthen regional networks in preparation for the 2009-2010 elections cycle. This

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<sup>1</sup> The three components presented here are a consolidation of the 5 components described in the PEP Activity Concept Paper (October 2003). Section 2.4 maps the concept paper components to the three PEP Activity components.

will increase regional capacity to expose electoral-related corruption and push for greater accountability and transparency in electoral processes at all levels.

## **2. Regional Elections Norms and Standards**

This component will support regional initiatives to improve electoral processes through compliance with regional election norms and standards. Near term efforts will focus on using the norms and standards developed by the Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) to monitor and observe the electoral contests taking place in 2004 and 2005. In the longer term, this component will seek to strengthen the norms and standards by (a) harmonizing them with norms and standards developed by the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), (b) integrating gender checklists into the body of the standards rather than as an appendix, and (c) promoting adoption of the norms and standards by national legislatures so that they have the strength of law rather than being merely guidance. Formal adoption of a generally recognized and agreed-to set of norms and standards is critical to preventing and mitigating conflict and human rights abuses.

## **3. Prevention and Mitigation of Conflict and Human Rights Abuses**

Through this component PEP will strengthen the capacity of regional organizations to prevent, mitigate, manage, and resolve election-related conflicts. It will support development of conflict “early warning” mechanisms (CEWARN), provide services to bilateral missions seeking to work in the area of conflict, and promote application of norms and standards as a conflict prevention tool. This component will also strengthen the capacity of regional organizations to provide specific support to victims of human rights violations.

## **JUSTIFICATION FOR CATEGORIAL EXCLUSION REQUEST**

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The items described justify **Categorical Exclusions**, pursuant to 22 CFR §216.2(c)(1) and (2), for which an Initial Environmental Examination, or an Environmental Assessment are not required because the actions do not have an effect on the natural or physical environment.

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PEP interventions, as currently planned for components one through three fall into the following classes of action:

- (a) education, technical assistance and training (216.2(c)(2)(i));
  - (b) analyses, studies, and workshops (216.2(c)(2)(iii));
  - (c) document and information transfer (216.2(c)(2)(v)); and
  - (d) activities that will develop the capability of recipient countries to engage in development planning (216.2(c)(2)(xiv)).
- As currently planned, no interventions will directly affect the environment.

The *exact* nature of the interventions is still to be determined. Therefore, if during implementation, activities other than those described in the subject categorical exclusions are included in PEP that may directly affect the environment (such as construction or rehabilitation of facilities), an amended IEE shall be submitted requesting the appropriate threshold decision.

For activities funded under SO 16 that are outside the PEP framework, an IEE or Request for a Categorical Exclusion shall be submitted, as appropriate.